

Town Commissioner's Legislative Meeting Minutes
Charlestown, Maryland
December 12, 2023
6:00 PM
Town Hall, 241 Market Street and on Zoom

Attendees: Renee Capano, Rob Rinehart, Richard Mahan, Lou Wood, Jackie Akers, Bryan Lightner, Robert Straiton, Kathy SanDoe

Public in Attendance: Grayson and Will Pitcock, Debi Harvey, Karl Fockler, Mike Paraskewich

Zoom: Ursula Boudart, Robyn Rowe, Julie Campagna, Kimberly Lloyd

President Capano called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

Mr. Grayson Pitcock was asked to lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of Minutes – November 14 and November 28, 2023 – Charlestown Commissioners: Commissioner Akers motioned to approve both sets of minutes. Commissioner Rinehart seconded the motion. Approved 5-0.

Accounts Payable Review – Charlestown Commissioners: Commissioner Mahan made a correction on the previous month expenditures. The total Accounts Payable approved for the month, October 11, 2023 through November 14, 2023 was \$184,684.89 but should have been \$282,763.40. The difference was due to misreading a report. President Capano motioned to approve the remaining amount of \$98,078.51. Commissioner Akers seconded the motion. Approved 5-0. The total Accounts Payable for November 15, 2023 through December 12, 2023 was \$182,687.03. The highest expenses were for work done on C-Dock and the Water Pit. Commissioner Akers motioned to approve the Accounts Payable. Commissioner Rinehart seconded the motion. Approved 5-0.

Old Business

Engineering RFP – President Capano: The Town will not be renewing the agreement for services with AECOM as the Town Engineer and a letter has been sent notifying them in this regard. The Town is looking for a company that is more familiar with and specific to small town needs, is able to assist with writing grants for improving stormwater management, updating the stormwater ordinance, and can provide the planning needed for expanding the drinking water system. Commissioner Mahan has assisted with identifying engineering companies that appear to be more acquainted with small town needs. Mr. Lightner stated the hourly rates and specific costs for services would be requested, interviews will be conducted, and references will be checked. Commissioner Mahan motioned to approve the RFP and move forward with the search. Commissioner Rinehart seconded. Approved 5-0.

President's Report – President Capano

- Code Enforcement Officer Position – Commissioners Mahan and Rinehart, Mr. Bryan Lightner and Mr. Ken Confalone will conduct the interviews. Commissioner Akers motioned to advertise for the Code Enforcement Officer position. Commissioner Mahan seconded. Approved 5-0.

- Town Hall Service – Other Towns have service hours from 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM or 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM. After discussion, the 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM timeframe was selected. The new service hours will be advertised and begin on January 2, 2024. Commissioner Akers motioned to approved the new service hours and Commissioner Mahan seconded. Approved 5-0.
- Telework Agreements – There was a discussion regarding teleworking one day bi-weekly.

Community Heart and Soul Program – Commissioner Akers: This is a community engagement framework that includes the entire Town to help develop a shared vision for the future. A grant request is needed in order to help pay for the assistance to coach a project manager to implement the framework. The program helps to develop pride in the Town, gives residents more common ground to discuss challenges and opportunities, and can help increase volunteerism. Mr. Lightner suggested this could work very well with the updated of the Town’s Comprehensive Plan, about to get underway.

New Business

Resident Request on Tasker Lane – President Capano: Ms. Debi Harvey has requested a variance on fence height for her property and asked that the \$400.00 fee to take the request before the Appeals Board be waived. As the fee is used to pay the Court Reporter and Town Attorney during the hearing, the fee will not be waived.

Annexation of Charlestown Manor Beach and Campground – President Capano: Karl Fockler and Mike Paraskewich presented information on behalf of Kimberly Lloyd regarding an request for the Town to consider annexing the County portion of the Charlestown Manor Beach and Campground. The annexation could allow the entire property to be zoned Shoreline Recreational Residential (RR), which is more compatible with the owner’s future vision for the property. The property is currently served by a well and would agree to hook into Town water when it is available. The County provides sewer on their portion. The property would continue as a campground and could add additional campsites and possibly some elevated bungalows. As a commercial property, this could be a financial benefit to the Town. A bridge from Avalon Park to the campground could also be explored. While the Commissioners agreed to discuss the possible annexation, no decision was reached.

Maryland Home and Garden Pilgrimage Tour – Karl Fockler: The Pilgrimage will be held in Charlestown on Saturday, May 4, 2024. Properties scheduled for the tour are 1. 107/Tory House, 2. The Water Tower at the Tory House, 3. Red Lyon Tavern, 4. Indian Queen Tavern, 5. Post Office/Town Hall, 6. St. John’s Methodist Church and Cemetery, 7. Eagle Point Gun Club, 8. The Wharf/Long Point, 9. The Still House, 10. The Barnes’ Ice House, 11. The Wellwood Yacht Club, 12. The Klondyke House, 13. Tara’s Garden. Other points of Interest would include the Paca House and Foot Log Park. A suggestion was made that the Young at Heart Club could plan a bake sale fundraiser at the church that day. Mr. Fockler thanked M. Davis and Sons for their generous donation. Any funds raised by ticket sales will go toward completing the restoration of the Water Tower located at the Tory House. The Town will place an advertisement in the magazine for the tour.

Radar Speed Signs – President Capano: The radar speed trailers that the Sheriff’s Office uses costs around \$15,000.00 each. They collect data and can take pictures, but they do not issue citations.

Town Hall Vestibule Estimates – Commissioner Mahan: Randy Davis submitted an estimate for \$8,200.00 to construct a vestibule at the entrance to Town Hall. Bobby Straiton, Maintenance Supervisor,

estimated \$3,000.00 would be needed for materials and his crew could build it. Commissioner Wood motioned for Town Staff to build the vestibule and not to exceed \$3,500.00. Commissioner Rinehart seconded. Approved 5-0.

Comments

President Capano stated that the Governor is considering reducing or eliminating the highway user monies due to the Maryland Department of Transportation's projected deficit. These funds are used by the Town each year for road maintenance and repair, so it's necessary for us to contact the Secretary of MDOT, State Delegate Hornberger, and the Comptroller, to inform them how vital these funds are to Charlestown. She plans to attend the MD Legislative Session in January and the Mayor's Conference at the end of February. She also plans to meet with Katie Parks from the Maryland Economic Development Corporation plans to discuss potential funding opportunities for the new Town Hall addition.

Commissioner Wood mentioned the wreaths being unlit is unfortunate and the group discussed the possibility of purchasing lights for them in the future.

Grayson Pitcock said he realized from attending this meeting that there can be two sides to consider on every issue. He also wanted to share that he has seen drivers running stop signs in Trinity Woods. President Capano explained the process to petition for considering speed hump installation and that radar speed signs could also help. She offered to give him guidance about a potential eagle scout project. Mr. Lightner suggested Grayson might also like to attend a future Green Team meeting and assist with some of their projects, like collecting trash along Rt. 7 and planting trees in Town parks.

Commissioner Akers motioned to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Mahan seconded. Approved 5-0.

Meeting adjourned at 8:08 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy SanDoe, Town Clerk